Eleventh Edition

Volume I: To 1877

A People & A Nation

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

Kamensky / Sheriff / Blight / Chudacoff / Logevall / Bailey / Norton

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ABBREVIATIONS

AUS.	AUSTRIA
BEL.	BELGIUM
B. H.	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
CR.	CROATIA
CZ.	CZECH REPUBLIC
DEN.	DENMARK
HUNG.	HUNGARY
K.	KOSOVO
LUX.	LUXEMBOURG
MAC.	MACEDONIA
MO.	MONTENEGRO
NETH.	NETHERLANDS
SE.	SERBIA
SLK.	SLOVAKIA
SLN.	SLOVENIA
SWITZ.	SWITZERLAND

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BRIEF CONTENTS

CONTENTS

FEATURES

MAPS

FIGURES

TABLES

LINKS TO THE WORLD

LEGACY FOR A PEOPLE AND A NATION

VISUALIZING THE PAST

PREFACE

With this eleventh edition, *A People and A Nation* consolidates the last edition's broad structural changes, fine-tuning the streamlining and chapter combinations that made the text easier to assign over the course of an average academic semester. In this edition the authors introduced new interpretations, updated content to reflect recent research, and thought hard about what new features might engage our readers. This edition also more fully embraces the possibilities offered by digital platforms, as you will learn about in the MindTap description that follows later in this introduction.

A People and A Nation represents our continuing rediscovery of America's history—our evolving understandings of the people and the forces that have shaped the nation and our stories of the struggles, triumphs, and tragedies of America's past.

Key Themes in A People and A Nation

Published originally in 1982, A People and A Nation was the first U.S. history survey textbook to move beyond a political history to tell the story of the nation's people—the story of all its people—as well. That commitment remains. Our text encompasses the diversity of America's people and the changing texture of their everyday lives. The country's political narrative is here, too, as in previous editions. But as historical questions have evolved over the years and new authors have joined the textbook team, we have asked new questions about "a people" and "a nation." In our recent editions, we remind students that the "A People" and "A Nation" that appear in the book's title are neither timeless nor stable. European colonists and the land's indigenous inhabitants did not belong to this "nation" or work to create it, and Americans have struggled over the shape and meaning of their nation since its very beginning. The people about whom we write thought of themselves in various ways, and in ways that changed over time. Thus we emphasize not only the ongoing diversity of the nation's people, but their struggles, through time, over who belongs to that "people" and on what terms.

In *A People and A Nation,* the authors emphasize the changing global and transnational contexts within which the American colonies and the United States have acted. We pay attention to the economy, discussing the ways that an evolving market economy shaped the nation and the possibilities for its different peoples. We show how the meaning of identity—gender, race, class, sexuality, as well as region, religion, and family status—changes over time, and we find the nation's history in the mobility and contact and collision of its peoples. We discuss the role of the state and the expanding role and reach of the federal government; we pay attention to region and emphasize historical contests between federal power and local authority. We trace America's expansion and rise to unprecedented world power and examine its consequences. And we focus on the meaning of democracy and equality in American history, most particularly in tales of Americans' struggles for equal rights and social justice.

In *A People and A Nation*, we continue to challenge readers to think about the meaning of American history, not just to memorize facts. More than anything else, we want students to understand that the history of the American nation was not foreordained. Ours is a story of contingency. As, over time, people lived their day-to-day lives, made what choices they could, and fought for things they believed in, they helped to shape the future. What happened was not inevitable. Throughout the course of history, people faced difficult decisions, and those decisions mattered.

What's New in This Edition

Planning for the eleventh edition began at an authors' meeting near Cengage headquarters in Boston. Authors' meetings are always lively, and we discussed everything from recent scholarship and emerging trends in both U.S. and global history to the possibilities offered by digital platforms and the needs of the students who would be reading our work.

This edition continues to build on *A People and A Nation*'s hallmark themes, giving increased attention to the global perspective on American history that has characterized the book since its first edition. From the "Atlantic world" context of European colonies in North and South America to the discussion of international terrorism, the authors have incorporated the most recent globally oriented scholarship throughout the volume. We have stressed the incorporation of different peoples into the United States through territorial acquisition as well as through immigration. At the same time, we have integrated the discussion of such diversity into our narrative so as not to artificially isolate any group from the mainstream.

We have continued the practice of placing three probing questions at the end of each chapter's introduction to inspire and guide students' reading of the pages that follow. Additionally, focus questions and key terms have been added to this edition. The focus questions appear beneath each section title within every chapter to further support students in their reading and comprehension of the material. Key terms appear near the first mention of a term and are placed throughout each chapter.

Chapter-level Changes for the Eleventh Edition

For this edition, the authors reexamined every sentence, interpretation, map, chart, illustration, and caption, refined the narrative, presented new examples, updated bibliographies, and incorporated the best new scholarship. What

follows here is a description of chapter-level changes for the eleventh edition:

1. **Chapter 2: Europeans Colonize North America, 1600–1650**
   - New chapter-opening vignette on an episode of interracial violence in 1630 New England
2. **Chapter 3: North America in the Atlantic World, 1650–1720**
   - New *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature: "Fictions of Salem: Witch-Hunting in the American Grain"
3. **Chapter 4: Becoming America? 1720–1760**
   - Increased attention to Canadian maritime provinces in King George's War
4. **Chapter 5: The Ends of Empire, 1754–1774**
   - New information on Caribbean colonies' response to the Stamp Act and other imperial tax laws from rare pamphlets published in Barbados
   - New primary source material about the Stamp Act repeal and Boston Massacre trials
   - The *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature, "Women's Political Action," has been updated to reflect the 2016 presidential election
5. **Chapter 6: American Revolutions, 1775–1783**
   - Increased attention to the Spanish empire and the war in the Gulf of Mexico
   - More attention is given to African American soldiers in the American Revolution
   - New *Visualizing the Past* feature: "A British View of the Colonial Army"
6. **Chapter 8: Defining the Nation, 1801–1823**
   - New *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature: "The Star-Spangled Banner"
7. **Chapter 9: The Rise of the South, 1815–1860**
   - New section on slavery and capitalism
   - New material on the domestic slave trade
   - Additional information on slave religion
   - Additions to discussion of "planter paternalism"
   - Updated *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature on reparations
8. **Chapter 11: The Contested West, 1815–1860**
   - New topic ("The Mexican-United States Border") for *Legacy for A People and a Nation* feature
9. **Chapter 12: Politics and the Fate of the Union, 1824–1859**
   - Includes additional information about states' rights under nullification
   - Features a revised map for the Mexican War
   - Added material on Fremont, California, and the coming of the Mexican War
   - New scholarship on the underground railroad in New York
   - Increased attention to voter turnout in the Jackson era
   - The *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature on coalition politics has been updated
10. **Chapter 13: Transforming Fire: The Civil War, 1860–1865**
    - Chapter-opening vignette has been revised
    - Clarified discussion of secession crisis
    - Added discussion of Native Americans fighting in the Civil War
    - New discussion of the importance of the "Union Cause" to Northerners
11. **Chapter 14: Reconstruction: An Unfinished Revolution, 1865–1877**
    - Revised discussion of Radical Republican vision of Reconstruction
    - New scholarship on the military occupation of the South
    - New scholarship on the movement West
    - Revised discussion of railroad growth and expansion
    - Updated *Legacy for a People and a Nation* feature on the Lost Cause

Format for Each Chapter

Opening Vignette

Each chapter opens with a brief story about a person, place, or event and includes an image related to the story. The stories highlight specific events with historical significance while bringing attention to the larger themes in U.S. History during that period.

Focus Questions

Each chapter section is accompanied by a set of focus questions that guide students in absorbing and interpreting the information in the section that follows. This is a new pedagogical feature added in this edition to help students retain the information they are learning as they move through the book.

Chapter Features: *Legacies, Links to the World,* and *Visualizing the Past*

The following three features— *Legacy for* A People and a Nation, *Links to the World*, and *Visualizing the Past*—are included in each chapter of *A People and A Nation*, eleventh edition:. These features all illustrate key themes of the text and give students alternative ways to experience historical content.

Legacy for A People and A Nation features appear toward the end of each chapter and offer compelling and timely answers to students who question the relevance of

historical study by exploring the historical roots of contemporary topics. New *Legacies* in this edition include "Fictions of Salem: Witch-Hunting in the American Grain," "The Star-Spangled Banner," and "The Mexican-United States Border."

Links to the World features examine ties between America (and Americans) and the rest of the world. These brief essays detail the often little-known connections between developments here and abroad, vividly demonstrating that the geographical region that is now the United States has never been isolated from other peoples and countries. Essay topics range broadly over economic, political, social, technological, medical, and cultural history, and the feature appears near relevant discussions in each chapter. This edition includes new *Links* on anthropologist Margaret Mead and on Sputnik and American education. Each *Link* feature highlights global interconnections with unusual and lively examples that will both intrigue and inform students.

Visualizing the Past features offer striking images along with brief discussions intended to help students analyze the images as historical sources and to understand how visual materials can reveal aspects of America's story that otherwise might remain unknown. New to this edition is "A British View of the Colonial Army" in Chapter 6.

Summary

The core text of each chapter ends with a brief summary that helps students synthesize what they have just read and directs students to see long-term trends and recurring themes that appear across chapters.

Suggested Readings

A list of secondary sources appears at the end of each chapter for students and instructors who want to dig deeper into the content of the chapter.

Key Terms

Within each chapter, terms are boldfaced for students' attention with brief definitions appearing on the same page. Terms highlighted include concepts, laws, treaties, movements and organizations, legal cases, and battles.

MindTap for *A People and A Nation*

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MindTap for *A People and A Nation* is a flexible online learning platform that provides students with an immersive learning experience to build and foster critical thinking skills. Through a carefully designed chapter-based learning path, MindTap allows students to easily identify learning objectives; draw connections and improve writing skills by 1) completing unit-level essay assignments; 2) reading short, manageable sections from the ebook: 3) and testing their content knowledge with map-based critical thinking questions.

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Supplements for *A People and A Nation*

- **Instructor's Companion Website.** The Instructor's Companion Website, accessed through the Instructor Resource Center (login.cengage.com), houses all of the supplemental materials you can use for your course. This includes a Test Bank, Instructor's Manual, and PowerPoint Lecture Presentations. The Test Bank, offered in Microsoft® Word® and Cognero® formats, contains multiple-choice, true-or-false, and essay questions for each chapter. Cognero® is a flexible, online system that allows you to author, edit, and manage test bank content for *A People and a Nation*, 11e. Create multiple test versions instantly and deliver through your LMS from your classroom, or wherever you may be, with no special installs or downloads required. The Instructor's Resource Manual includes chapter summaries, and outlines, learning objectives, suggested lecture topics, discussion questions class activities, and suggestions for additional films to watch. Finally, the PowerPoint Lectures are ADA-compliant slides collate the key takeaways from the chapter in concise visual formats perfect for in-class presentations or for student review.
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- *Doing History: Research and Writing in the Digital Age,* 2e ISBN: 9781133587880 Prepared by Michael J. Galgano, J. Chris Arndt, and Raymond M. Hyser of

James Madison University. Whether you're starting down the path as a history major or simply looking for a straightforward, systematic guide to writing a successful paper, this text's "soup to nuts" approach to researching and writing about history addresses every step of the process: locating your sources, gathering information, writing and citing according to various style guides, and avoiding plagiarism.

- *Writing for College History,* 1e ISBN: 9780618306039 Prepared by Robert M. Frakes of Clarion University. This brief handbook for survey courses in American, western, and world history guides students through the various types of writing assignments they may encounter in a history class. Providing examples of student writing and candid assessments of student work, this text focuses on the rules and conventions of writing for the college history course
- *The Modern Researcher*, 6e ISBN: 9780495318705 Prepared by Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff of Columbia University. This classic introduction to the techniques of research and the art of expression thoroughly covers every aspect of research, from the selection of a topic through the gathering of materials, analysis, writing, revision, and publication of findings. They present the process not as a set of rules but through actual cases that put the subtleties of research in a useful context. Part One covers the principles and methods of research; Part Two covers writing, speaking, and getting one's work published.
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Mary Beth Norton

Born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Mary Beth Norton received her BA from the University of Michigan (1964) and her PhD from Harvard University (1969). She is the Mary Donlon Alger Professor of American History at Cornell University. Her dissertation won the Allan Nevins Prize. She has written *The British-Americans* (1972); *Liberty's Daughters* (1980, 1996); *Founding Mothers & Fathers* (1996), which was one of three finalists for the 1997 Pulitzer Prize in History; and *In the Devil's Snare* (2002), one of five finalists for the 2003 *L.A. Times* Book Prize in History and won the English-Speaking Union's Ambassador Book Award in American Studies for 2003. Her most recent book is *Separated by Their Sex* (2011). She has coedited three volumes on American women's history. She was also general editor of the *American Historical Association's Guide to Historical Literature* (1995). Her articles have appeared in such journals as the *American Historical Review, William and Mary Quarterly*, and *Journal of Women's History*. Mary Beth has served as president of the American Historical Association and the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians, as vice president for research of the American Historical Association, and as a presidential appointee to the National Council on the Humanities. She has appeared on Book TV, the History and Discovery Channels, PBS, and NBC as a commentator on Early American history, and she has lectured frequently to high school teachers. She has received four honorary degrees and is an elected member of both the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society. She has held fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities; the Guggenheim, Rockefeller, and Starr Foundations; and the Henry E. Huntington Library. In 2005–2006, she was the Pitt Professor of American History and Institutions at the University of Cambridge and Newnham College.

A People & A Nation

1

Three Old Worlds Create a New, 1492–1600

CHAPTER OUTLINE

A generation after Columbus crossed the Atlantic, a Spanish soldier named Hernán Cortés traded words with the ruler of the Aztec empire. Motecuhzoma II was among the most powerful men in the Americas (as Europeans had recently named their "new" world). Thousands of loyal courtiers accompanied him to the gates of Tenochtitlán, the capital, one of the largest cities in the world. Cortés, his Spanish troops, and their Native allies approached on horseback, flying the flag of Charles V, the king of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor, one of the most powerful men in the "old" world. The conquistador and the Aztec ruler bowed to each other, and spoke. "Montezuma bade him welcome," recalled Bernal Díaz del Castillo, a soldier on the expedition. "There is nothing to fear," Cortés told his host. "We have come to your house in Mexico as friends."

This mixture of ceremony, half-truths, and outright lies was among the first exchanges between two great civilizations from two sides of a great ocean. It was not an easy conversation to have. Motecuhzoma spoke Nahuatl and had never heard Spanish; Cortés spoke Spanish and knew no Nahuatl. (The Spanish could not even pronounce the Aztec emperor's name, garbling "Motecuhzoma" as "Montezuma.") But in fact the conversation between Cortés and Motecuhzoma was not a dialogue but a three-way exchange. As Bernal Díaz explains, Cortés addressed the Aztec emperor "through the mouth of Doña Marina."

Who was Doña Marina? Born at the eastern edge of Motecuhzoma's dominion around the year 1500, she grew up at the margins of Aztec and Maya territories, worlds in motion and often at war. Her parents were Nahuatl-speaking nobles. The name they gave her is lost to history. As a child,

◀ Perched on a throne and wearing elaborate plumes in his hat, Cortès accepts the surrender of the Cuauthemoc in August 1521. Seated behind him in traditional dress, Doña Marina translates the negotiation, with gestures that exactly mirror his. The image, from a mural created by Tlaxcalan artists in the 1550s, shows the complex role of the interpreter in the meeting of worlds. AKG Images

Chronology

13,000–10,000 BCE	■ Paleo-Indians migrate from Siberia to western North America, some by boat and some across the Beringia land bridge
7000 BCE	■ Cultivation of food crops begins in America
ca. 2000 BCE	■ Olmec civilization appears
ca. 300–600 CE	■ Height of influence of Teotihuacán
ca. 600–900 CE	■ Classic Mayan civilization
1000 CE	■ Ancient Pueblos build settlements in modern states of Arizona and New Mexico ■ Bantu-speaking peoples spread across much of southern Africa
1001	■ Norse establish settlement in "Vinland"
1050–1250	■ Height of influence of Cahokia ■ Prevalence of Mississippian culture in modern midwestern and southeastern United States
14th century	■ Aztec rise to power
Early 15th century	■ Portuguese establish trading posts in North Africa
1450s–80s	■ Portuguese colonize islands in the Mediterranean Atlantic
1477	■ Marco Polo's *Travels* describes China
1492	■ Columbus reaches Bahamas
1494	■ Treaty of Tordesillas divides land claims in Africa, India, and South America between Spain and Portugal
1497	■ Cabot reaches North America
1499	■ Amerigo Vespucci explores South American coast
1513	■ Ponce de León explores Florida
1518–30	■ Smallpox epidemic devastates indigenous populations of West Indies and Central and South America
1519	■ Cortés invades Mexico
1521	■ Aztec Empire falls to Spaniards
1524	■ Verrazzano sails along Atlantic coast of North America
1534–35	■ Cartier explores St. Lawrence River
1539–42	■ De Soto explores southeastern North America
1540–42	■ Coronado explores southwestern North America
1587–90	■ Raleigh's Roanoke colony vanishes
1588	■ Harriot publishes *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* ■ English defeat of the Spanish Armada

she was either stolen from her family or given by them to indigenous slave traders. She wound up in the Gulf Coast town of Tabasco, in the household of a Maya cacique. There, in addition to her native Nahuatl, she learned Yucatec, the local strain of the Mayan language. She spoke both tongues well when she encountered the Spanish, who brought yet a third civilization into her changing world in the spring of 1519.

The leaders of Tabasco showered Cortés with tribute, offerings they hoped would persuade the Spanish to continue west, into the heart of their enemies' territory. In addition to gold and cloth, the caciques gave the invaders twenty Native women. The young bilingual slave was one of them. The invaders baptized her under the Christian name "Marina."

Marina learned Spanish quickly, and her fluency in this third language greatly increased her value to the would-be conquerors. As Cortés and his troops progressed inland, Marina's way with words proved as vital to the success of the expedition as any other

weapon they carried. Díaz called her "a person of the greatest importance." Cortés, reluctant to share credit for his triumphs, rarely mentioned her in his letters. But she bore him a son, Martín. Sometime before her death in 1527 or 1528, Marina married another Spanish officer.

A speaker of Nahuatl, Yucatec, and Spanish; the mother of one of the first *mestizo* or mixed-race children; the wife of a conquistador: Marina was a young woman in whom worlds met and mingled. The Spanish signaled their respect by addressing her as "Doña," meaning lady. Nahuatl speakers rendered *Marina* as *Malintzin*, using the suffix *–tzin* to denote her high status. Spaniards stumbled over the Nahuatl *Malintzin* and often called her *La Malinche*: a triple name, from a double mistranslation.

The legacy of Doña Marina/Malintzin/La Malinche remains as ambiguous as her name. Her fluency helped the invaders to triumph—a catastrophe for the Aztecs and other indigenous peoples. Their descendants consider Doña Marina their foremother and their betrayer, at once a victim and a perpetrator of the Spanish conquest. Today in Mexico, the word *malanchista* is a grave insult, equivalent to "collaborator" or even "traitor." Though she lived for less than thirty years, nearly half a millennium ago, Marina continues to embody the ambiguities of colonial American history, in which power was shifting and contested, and much was lost in translation.

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What happens when worlds collide? For thousands of years before 1492, human societies in the Americas developed in complex relation to each other, yet in isolation from the rest of the world. The era that began in the Christian fifteenth century brought that long-standing isolation to an end. As Europeans sought treasure and trade, peoples from two sides of the globe came into regular contact for the first time. Their interactions involved curiosity and confusion, trade and theft, enslavement and endurance. All were profoundly changed.

By the time Doña Marina held Cortés's words in her mouth, the age of European expansion and colonization was already under way. Over the next 350 years, Europeans would spread their influence across the globe. The history of the tiny colonies that became the United States must be seen in this broad context of European exploration and exploitation, of Native resistance, and of African enslavement and survival. Even as Europeans slowly achieved dominance, their fates continued to be shaped by the strategies of Americans and Africans. In the Americas of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, three old worlds came together to produce a new.

The continents that European sailors reached in the late fifteenth century had their own histories, internal struggles that the intruders sometimes exploited and often ignored. The indigenous residents of what came to be called *the Americas* were the world's most skillful plant breeders; they developed crops more nutritious and productive than those grown in Europe, Asia, or Africa. They had invented systems of writing and mathematics, and created more accurate calendars than those used on the other side of the Atlantic. In the Americas, as in Europe, societies rose and fell as leaders succeeded or failed to expand their power. But the arrival of Europeans altered the Americans' struggles with one another, just as the colonization of the Americas repeatedly reshaped the European balance of powers.

After 1400, European nations not only warred on their own continent but also tried to acquire valuable colonies and trading posts elsewhere in the world. Initially interested primarily in Asia and Africa, Europeans eventually focused mostly on the Americas. Their designs changed the course of history on four continents.

"In the beginning, all the world was America," wrote the English philosopher John Locke at the end of the seventeenth century. But in fact, America wasn't "America" until Europeans renamed the ancient homelands of hundreds of nations after one of their own explorers. The continent was not innocent, empty, and waiting, as Locke implied, but densely peopled and engaged in its own complex history. The collision of old and new worlds changed that history. New opportunities for some meant new risks for others. Every conquest contained a defeat. Every new place name was layered upon an older history. And a great deal was lost in translation.

- *What were the key characteristics of the three worlds that met in the Americas?*
- *What impacts did their encounter have on each of them?*
- *What were the crucial initial developments in that encounter?*

1-1 American Societies

- **How were the Americas settled?**
- **How did the first Americans—the Paleo-Indians—adapt to their environment?**
- **How did Native peoples who began to domesticate and cultivate food crops develop socially and culturally?**

Human beings originated on the continent of Africa, where hominid remains about 3 million years old have been found in what is now Ethiopia. Over many millennia, the growing population slowly dispersed to the other continents. Because the climate was then far colder than it is now, much of the earth's water was concentrated in huge rivers of ice called glaciers. Sea levels were accordingly lower, and landmasses covered a larger proportion of the earth's surface than they do today. Scholars long believed that the Clovis people, Siberians who were among the earliest inhabitants of the Americas, crossed a land bridge known as Beringia (at the site of the Bering Strait) approximately twelve thousand to fourteen thousand years ago. Yet striking new archaeological discoveries in both North and South America suggest that parts of the Americas may have been settled significantly earlier, perhaps by seafarers. Some geneticists now theorize that three successive waves of migrants began at least thirty thousand years ago. About 12,500 years ago, when the climate warmed and sea levels rose, Americans were separated from the peoples living on the connected continents of Asia, Africa, and Europe.

1-1a Ancient America

The first Americans, now called **Paleo-Indians**, were nomadic hunters of game and gatherers of plants. They spread throughout North and South America, probably moving as bands composed of extended families. By about 11,500 years ago, the Paleo-Indians were making fine stone projectile points, which they attached to spears and used to kill and butcher bison (buffalo), woolly mammoths, and other large mammals. As the Ice Age ended and the human population increased, the large American mammals except the bison disappeared. Scholars disagree about whether overhunting or the change in climate caused their extinction. In either case, deprived of their primary source of meat, Paleo-Indians found new ways to survive.

Paleo-Indians The earliest peoples of the Americas.

By approximately nine thousand years ago, the residents of what is now central Mexico began to cultivate food crops, especially maize (corn), squash, beans, avocados, and peppers. In the Andes Mountains of South America, people started to grow potatoes. As knowledge of agricultural techniques improved and spread through the Americas, vegetables and maize proved a more reliable source of food than hunting and gathering. Except in the harshest climates, most Paleo-Indians started to stay longer in one place, so that they could tend fields regularly. Some established permanent settlements; others moved several times a year among fixed sites. They used controlled burning to clear forests, which created cultivable lands by killing trees and fertilizing the soil with ashes, and also opened meadows that attracted deer and other wildlife. Although they traded such items as shells, flint, salt, and copper, no society became dependent on another group for items vital to its survival.

Wherever agriculture dominated the economy, complex civilizations flourished. Such societies, assured of steady supplies of grains and vegetables, no longer had to devote all their energies to procuring sufficient food. Instead, they were able to accumulate wealth, trade with other groups, produce ornamental objects, and create rituals and ceremonies to cement and transmit their cultures. In North America, the successful cultivation of nutritious crops, especially maize, beans, and squash, seems to have led to the growth and development of all the major civilizations: first the large city-states of Mesoamerica (modern Mexico and Guatemala) and then the urban clusters known collectively as the Mississippian culture and located in the present-day United States. Each of these societies reached its height of population and influence only after achieving success in agriculture. Each later declined and collapsed after reaching the limits of its food supply, with dire political and military consequences.

1-1b Mesoamerican Civilizations

Archaeologists and historians know little about the first major Mesoamerican civilization, the Olmecs, who about four thousand years ago lived near the Gulf of Mexico in cities dominated by temple pyramids. The Mayas and Teotihuacán, which developed approximately two thousand years later, are better recorded. Teotihuacán, founded in the Valley of Mexico about 300 BCE (Before the Common Era), eventually became one of the largest urban areas in the world, housing perhaps 100,000 people in the fifth century CE (Common Era). Teotihuacán's commercial network extended hundreds of miles in all directions; many peoples prized its obsidian (a green volcanic glass), used to make fine knives and mirrors. Pilgrims traveled long distances to visit Teotihuacán's immense pyramids and the great temple of Quetzalcoatl—the feathered serpent, primary god of central Mexico.

On the Yucatan Peninsula, in today's eastern Mexico, the Mayas built urban centers boasting tall pyramids and temples. They studied astronomy and created an elaborate writing

system. Their city-states, though, engaged in near-constant battle with one another, much as Europeans did at the same time. Warfare and an inadequate food supply caused the collapse of the most powerful cities by 900 CE, thus ending the classic era of Mayan civilization. When the Spaniards arrived 600 years later, only a few remnants of the once-mighty society remained, in places like the town where Doña Marina was enslaved.

1-1c Pueblos and Mississippians

Ancient Native societies in what is now the United States learned to grow maize, squash, and beans from Mesoamericans, but the nature of the relationship among the various cultures remains unknown. (No Mesoamerican artifacts have been found north of the Rio Grande, but some items resembling Mississippian objects have been excavated in northern Mexico, suggesting the presence of trade routes.) The Hohokam, Mogollon, and ancient Pueblo peoples of the modern states of Arizona and New Mexico subsisted by combining hunting and gathering with agriculture in an arid region. Hohokam villagers constructed extensive irrigation systems, occasionally relocating settlements when water supplies failed. Between 900 and 1150 CE in Chaco Canyon, the Pueblos built fourteen "Great Houses," multistory stone structures averaging two hundred rooms. The canyon, at the juncture of perhaps four hundred miles of roads, served as a major regional trading and processing center for turquoise, used then as now to create beautiful ornamental objects. Yet the sparse and unpredictable rainfall eventually caused the Chacoans to migrate to other sites.

At almost the same time, the unrelated Mississippian culture flourished in what is now the midwestern and southeastern United States. Relying largely on maize, squash, nuts, pumpkins, and venison for food, the Mississippians lived in substantial settlements organized hierarchically. The largest of their urban centers was the **City of the Sun** (now called **Cahokia**), which was located near modern St. Louis. Located on rich farmland near the confluence of the Illinois, Missouri, and Mississippi rivers, Cahokia, like Teotihuacán and Chaco Canyon, served as a focal point for both culture and trade. At its peak (in the eleventh and twelfth centuries CE), the City of the Sun covered more than five square miles and had a population of about twenty thousand: small by Mesoamerican standards but larger than any other northern community—indeed, larger than London in the same era.

Although the Cahokians never invented a writing system, these sun-worshippers developed an accurate calendar, evidenced by their creation of a woodhenge—a large circle of tall timber posts aligned with the solstices and the equinox. The tallest of the city's 120 pyramids, today called Monks Mound, covered sixteen acres at its base and stood 100 feet high at its topmost level. It remains the largest earthwork ever built in the Americas. It sat at the northern end of the Grand Plaza, surrounded by seventeen other mounds, some used for burials. Yet following 1250 CE, the city was abandoned, several decades after a disastrous earthquake. Archaeologists believe that climate change and the degradation of the environment, caused by overpopulation and the destruction of nearby forests, contributed to the city's collapse. Afterwards, warfare increased as large-scale population movements destabilized the region.

Nursing-mother-effigy bottle, Cahokia Culture, Mississippian Period, 1200-1400 (ceramic), American School / St. Louis Museum of Science & Natural History, Missouri, US/Photo © The Detroit Institute of Arts/The Bridgeman Art Library

▲ Archaeologists discovered this effigy bottle near Cahokia in present-day Illinois. The statue, which was made c1200–1400 CE, depicts a woman sitting cross-legged and nursing an infant.

1-1d Aztecs

Far to the South, the Aztecs (also called Mexicas) migrated into the Valley of Mexico during the twelfth century CE. The ruins of Mayan Teotihuacán, deserted for at least two hundred years, awed and mystified the migrants. Their chronicles record that their primary deity, Huitzilopochtli—a war god represented by an eagle—directed them to establish their capital on an island where they saw an eagle eating a serpent, the symbol of Quetzalcoatl. That island city became Tenochtitlán, the nerve center of a rigidly stratified society composed of warriors, merchants, priests, common people, and slaves.

The Aztecs conquered their neighbors, demanding tribute in textiles, gold, foodstuffs, and human beings who could be sacrificed to Huitzilopochtli. The war god's taste for blood was not easily quenched. In the Aztec year Ten Rabbit (the Christian 1502), at the coronation of Motecuhzoma II, thousands of people were sacrificed by having their still-beating hearts torn from their bodies.

City of the Sun (Cahokia) Area located near modern St. Louis, Missouri, where about twenty thousand people inhabited a metropolitan area.

IRA BLOCK/National Geographic Creative

▲ Even today, many centuries after the peak of its ceremonial and economic power, the central mound of the Cahokia settlement, known as the Monk's Mound, still dominates the flat landscape around it, as this 2010 photo shows.

The Aztecs believed they lived in the age of the Fifth Sun. Four times previously, they wrote, the earth and all the people who lived on it had been destroyed. They predicted their own world would end in earthquakes and hunger. In the Aztec year Thirteen Flint, volcanoes erupted, sickness and hunger spread, wild beasts attacked children, and an eclipse of the sun darkened the sky. Did some priest wonder whether the Fifth Sun was approaching its end? In time, the Aztecs learned that Europeans knew the year Thirteen Flint as 1492.

1-2 North America in 1492

- **What factors contributed to the diversity of indigenous peoples in North America?**
- **What role did gender play in the development and organization of indigenous societies?**
- **What role did warfare play in pre-Columbian American society?**

Over the centuries, the Americans who lived north of Mexico adapted their once-similar ways of life to very different climates and terrains, thus creating the diverse culture areas (ways of subsistence) that the Europeans encountered when they arrived (see Map 1.1). Scholars often delineate such culture areas by language group (such as Algonquian or Iroquoian), because neighboring indigenous nations commonly spoke related languages. Societies that lived in environments not well suited to agriculture—because of inadequate rainfall or poor soil, for example—followed a nomadic lifestyle. Within the area of the present-day United States, these groups included the Paiutes and Shoshones, who inhabited the Great Basin (now Nevada and Utah). Because of the difficulty of finding sufficient food, such hunter-gatherer bands were small, usually composed of one or more related families. The men hunted small animals, and women gathered seeds and berries. Where large game was more plentiful and food supplies therefore more certain, as in present-day central and western Canada and the Great Plains, bands of hunters were somewhat larger.

In more favorable environments, larger indigenous groups combined agriculture with gathering, hunting, and fishing. Those who lived near the seacoasts, like the Chinooks of present-day Washington and Oregon, consumed fish and shellfish in addition to growing crops and gathering seeds and berries. Residents of the interior (for example, the Arikaras of the Missouri River valley) hunted large animals while also cultivating maize, squash, and beans. The peoples of what is now eastern Canada and the northeastern United States also combined hunting, fishing, and agriculture. They used controlled fires both to open land for cultivation and to assist in hunting.

Extensive trade routes linked distant peoples. For instance, hoe and spade blades manufactured from stone mined in modern southern Illinois have been found as far northeast as Lake Erie and as far west as the Plains. Commercial and

Map 1.1 Native Cultures of North America

The Native peoples of the North American continent effectively used the resources of the regions in which they lived. As this map shows, coastal groups relied on fishing, residents of fertile areas engaged in agriculture, and other peoples employed hunting (often combined with gathering) as a primary mode of subsistence.

other interactions among disparate groups speaking different languages were aided by the universally understood symbol of friendship—the calumet, a feathered tobacco pipe offered to strangers at initial encounters. Across the continent, Native groups sought alliances and waged war against their enemies when diplomacy failed. Their histories, though not written, were complex and dynamic, long before Europeans arrived.

1-2a Gendered Division of Labor

Societies that relied primarily on hunting large animals, such as deer and buffalo, assigned that task to men, allotting food preparation and clothing production to women. Before such nomadic bands acquired horses from the Spaniards, women—occasionally assisted by dogs—also carried the family's belongings whenever the band relocated. Such a sexual division of labor was universal among hunting peoples, regardless of location. Agricultural societies assigned work in divergent ways. The Pueblo peoples, who lived in sixty or seventy autonomous villages and spoke five different languages, defined agricultural labor as men's work. In the east, large clusters of peoples speaking Algonquian, Iroquoian, and Muskogean languages allocated most agricultural chores to women, although men cleared the land. French colonizers often commented on Native gender roles that were very different from their own. "Men leave the arrangement of the household to the women, without interfering with them; they cut, and decide, and give away as they please, without making the husband angry,"

noted Father Paul le Juene of the Algonquian peoples he missionized along the shores of the St. Lawrence River. In the six nations of the Haudenosaunee (whom French called "Iroquois"), women held positions of political and cultural authority. This too Europeans found striking. "Amongst the Huron nations," wrote Father Pierre de Charlevoix, "the women name the counselors, and often chuse persons of their own sex." Indeed, he said, "the women have the chief authority amongst all the nations of the Huron language," excepting the Oneida. In general, he thought, they handled this surprising power ably.

Everywhere in North America, women cared for young children, while older youths learned adult skills from their same-sex parent. Children had a great deal of freedom. Young people commonly chose their own marital partners, and in most societies couples could easily divorce if they no longer wished to live together. In contrast to the earlier Mississippian cultures, populations in these societies remained at a level sustainable by existing food supplies, largely because of low birth rates. Infants and toddlers nursed until the age of two or even longer, and taboos prevented couples from having sexual intercourse during that period.

1-2b Social Organization

The southwestern and eastern agricultural peoples had similar social organizations. They lived in villages, sometimes with a thousand or more inhabitants. The Pueblos resided in multistory buildings constructed on terraces along the sides of cliffs or other easily defended sites. Northern Iroquois villages (in modern New York State) were composed of large, rectangular, bark-covered structures, or longhouses; the name Haudenosaunee means "People of the Longhouse." In the present-day southeastern United States, Muskogeans and southern Algonquians lived in large houses made of thatch. Most of the eastern villages were surrounded by wooden palisades and ditches to fend off attackers.

In all the agricultural societies, each dwelling housed an extended family defined matrilineally (through a female line of descent). Mothers, their married daughters, and their daughters' husbands and children all lived together. Matrilineal descent did not imply matriarchy, or the wielding of power by women, but rather served as a means of reckoning kinship. Matrilineal ties also linked extended families into clans. The nomadic bands of the Prairies and Great Plains, by contrast,

Collection of Mary Beth Norton

▲ Jacques Le Moyne, an artist accompanying the French settlement in Florida in the 1560s (see Section 1-9b, p. 28), produced some of the first European images of North American peoples. His depiction of Native agricultural practices shows the gendered division of labor: men breaking up the ground with fishbone hoes before women drop seeds into the holes. But Le Moyne's version of the scene cannot be accepted uncritically: unable to abandon a European view of proper farming methods, he erroneously drew plowed furrows in the soil.

were most often related patrilineally (through the male line). They lacked settled villages and defended themselves from attack primarily by moving to safer locations when necessary.

1-2c War and Politics

The defensive design of Native villages points to the significance of warfare in pre-Columbian America. Long before Europeans arrived, residents of the continent fought one another for control of prime hunting and fishing territories, fertile agricultural lands, or sources of essential items, such as salt (for preserving meat) and flint (for making knives and arrowheads). Native warriors protected by wooden armor battled while standing in ranks facing each other, the better to employ their clubs and throwing spears, which were effective only at close quarters. They began to shoot arrows from behind trees only when they confronted European guns, which rendered their armor useless. People captured in such wars were sometimes enslaved and dishonored by losing their previous names and identities, but slavery was not a primary source of labor in pre-Columbian America.

Indigenous political structures varied considerably. Among Pueblos, the village council, composed of ten to thirty men, was the highest political authority; no larger organization connected multiple villages. Nomadic hunters also lacked formal links among separate bands. The Iroquois, by contrast, had an elaborate political hierarchy incorporating villages into nations and nations into a confederation. A council of representatives from each nation made crucial decisions of war and peace for the entire confederacy. In all the North American cultures, civil and war leaders divided political power and wielded authority only so long as they retained the confidence of the people. Autocratic rulers held sway only in southeastern chiefdoms descended from the Mississippians. Women more often assumed leadership roles among agricultural peoples, especially those in which females were the primary cultivators. Female sachems (rulers) led Algonquian villages in what is now Massachusetts, but women never became heads of hunting bands. Iroquois women did not become chiefs, yet clan matrons exercised political power, including the power to start and stop wars.

1-2d Religion

The continent's Native peoples were polytheistic, worshipping a multitude of gods, sometimes under one chief creator. The major deities of agricultural peoples like the Pueblos and Muskogeans were associated with cultivation, and their main festivals centered on planting and harvest. The most important gods of hunters like those living on the Great Plains were associated with animals, and their festivals were related to hunting.

A wide variety of cultures, comprising more than 10 million people, inhabited America north of Mexico when Europeans arrived. The hierarchical kingdoms of Mesoamerica bore little resemblance to the nomadic hunting societies of the Great Plains or to the agriculturalists of the Northeast or Southwest. The diverse inhabitants of North America spoke well over one thousand distinct languages. They are "Americans" only in retrospect, grouped under the name the Europeans assigned to the continent. They did not consider themselves one people, just as the inhabitants of England, France, Spain, and the Netherlands did not imagine themselves as "Europeans." Nor did they think of uniting to repel the invaders who washed up on their shores beginning in 1492.

1-3 African Societies

- How did the environment affect the development of societies in Africa?
- What was the influence of Islamic culture on African societies?
- What roles did gender play in the organization of African societies?

Fifteenth-century Africa, like fifteenth-century America, housed a variety of cultures adapted to different terrains and climates (see Map 1.2). Many of these cultures were of great antiquity. Like the ancient cultures of North America, the diverse peoples of Africa were dynamic and changing, with complex histories of their own.

In the north, along the Mediterranean Sea, lived the Berbers, who were Muslims—followers of the Islamic religion founded by the prophet Mohammed in the seventh century CE. On the east coast of Africa, Muslim city-states engaged in far-ranging trade with India, the Moluccas (part of modern Indonesia), and China. In these ports, sustained contact and intermarriage among Arabs and Africans created the Swahili language and culture. Through the East African city-states passed the Spice Route, the conduit of waterborne commerce between the eastern Mediterranean and East Asia; the rest followed the long land route across Central Asia known as the Silk Road.

South of the Mediterranean coast in the African interior lie the great Saharan and Libyan deserts, vast nearly waterless expanses crisscrossed by trade routes passing through oases. The introduction of the camel in the fifth century CE made long-distance travel possible, and as Islam expanded after the ninth century, commerce controlled by Muslim merchants helped to spread similar religious and cultural ideas throughout the region. Below the deserts, much of the continent is divided between tropical rain forests (along the coasts) and grassy plains (in the interior). People speaking a variety of languages and pursuing different subsistence strategies lived in a wide belt south of the deserts. South of the Gulf of Guinea, the grassy landscape came to be dominated by Bantu-speaking peoples, who left their homeland in modern Nigeria about two thousand years ago and slowly migrated south and east across the continent.

1-3a West Africa (Guinea)

The inhabitants of West Africa's tropical forests and savanna grasslands supported themselves with fishing, cattle herding, and agriculture for at least ten thousand years before Europeans set foot there in the fifteenth century. The northern region of West Africa, or Upper Guinea, was heavily influenced by

Map 1.2 Africa and Its Peoples, ca. 1400

On the African continent resided many different peoples in a variety of ecological settings and political units. Even before Europeans began to explore Africa's coastlines, its northern regions were linked to the Mediterranean (and thus to Europe) by a network of trade routes.

the Islamic culture of the Mediterranean. By the eleventh century CE, many of the region's inhabitants had become Muslims. Trade via camel caravans between Upper Guinea and the Muslim Mediterranean connected sub-Saharan Africa to Europe and West Asia. Africans sold ivory, gold, and slaves to northern merchants to obtain salt, dates, silk, and cotton cloth.

Upper Guinea runs from Cape Verde in the northeast to Cape Palmas in the southwest. The people of its northernmost region, the so-called Rice Coast (present-day Gambia, Senegal, and Guinea), fished and cultivated rice in coastal swamplands. The Grain Coast, to the south, was thinly populated and not readily accessible from the sea because it had only one good harbor (modern Freetown, Sierra Leone). Its inhabitants concentrated on farming and raising livestock.

In Lower Guinea, south and east of Cape Palmas, most Africans were farmers who practiced traditional religions, rather than Islam. Believing that spirits inhabited particular places, they invested those places with special significance. Like

RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY

▲ This brass depiction of a hunting scene with a man and animals was employed by the Akan peoples of the modern Ivory Coast to weigh gold. An otherwise mundane object required for domestic and foreign trade thus was decorative as well as useful, providing for today's viewers a sense of ancient African life.

the agricultural peoples of the Americas, they developed rituals intended to ensure good harvests. Throughout the region, villages composed of kin groups were linked into hierarchical kingdoms. At the time of initial European contact, decentralized political and social authority characterized the region.

1-3b Complementary Gender Roles

In the societies of West Africa, as in those of the Americas, men and women pursued different tasks. In general, both sexes shared agricultural duties. Men also hunted, managed livestock, and did most of the fishing. Women were responsible for child care, food preparation, manufacture, and trade. They managed the extensive local and regional networks through which families, villages, and small kingdoms exchanged goods.

Despite their different economies and the rivalries among states, the peoples of Lower Guinea had similar social systems organized on the basis of what anthropologists have called the dual-sex principle. Each sex handled its own affairs: male political and religious leaders governed men, and females ruled women. In the Dahomean kingdom, for example, every male official had his female counterpart; in the thirty Akan states on the Gold Coast, chiefs inherited their status through the female line, and each male chief had a female assistant who supervised other women. Many West African societies practiced polygyny (one man's having several wives, each of whom lived separately with her children). Thus, few adults lived permanently in marital households, but the dual-sex system ensured that their actions were subject to scrutiny by elders of their own sex.

Throughout Guinea, both women and men served as heads of the cults and secret societies that directed the spiritual life of the villages. Young women were initiated into the Sandé cult, young men into Poro. Neither cult was allowed to reveal its secrets to the opposite sex. Unlike some of their Native American contemporaries, West African women rarely held formal power over men.

1-3c Slavery in Guinea

Africans, like North America's Native peoples, created various forms of slavery long before contact with Europeans. Enslavement was sometimes used to punish criminals, but more often slaves were enemy captives or people who voluntarily enslaved themselves or their children to pay debts.

West African law recognized both individual and communal landownership, but men seeking to accumulate wealth needed access to laborers—wives, children, or slaves—who could work the land. People enslaved for life composed essential elements of the economy. Slaveholders had a right to the products of the men and women they held in bondage, although the degree to which slaves were exploited varied greatly, and slave status did not always descend to the next generation. Some slaves were held as chattel; others could engage in trade, retaining a portion of their profits; and still others achieved prominent political or military positions. All, however, found it difficult to overcome the social stigma of enslavement, and could be traded or sold at the will of their owners.

West Africans, then, were agricultural peoples, skilled at tending livestock, hunting, fishing, and manufacturing cloth from plant fibers and animal skins. They were accustomed to a relatively egalitarian relationship between the sexes, especially within the context of religion. Carried as captives to the Americas, they became essential to transplanted European societies that used their labor but had little respect for their cultures.

1-4 European Societies

- What were the similarities in the everyday lives of Europeans across the continent?
- What roles did gender play in the social and cultural development of European society?
- What developments drove Europeans to engage in the exploration of the wider world?

In the fifteenth century, Europeans, too, were agricultural peoples. Split into numerous small, warring peoples, the continent of Europe was divided linguistically, politically, and economically. Yet the daily lives of ordinary men and women exhibited many similarities. In most European societies, a few families wielded autocratic power over the rest. English society in particular was organized as a series of interlocking hierarchies; that is, each person (except those at the very top or bottom) was superior to some, inferior to others. At the base of such hierarchies were people held in various forms of bondage. Although Europeans were not subjected to perpetual slavery, Christian doctrine permitted the enslavement of "heathens" (non-Christians), and some Europeans' freedom was restricted by such conditions as serfdom, which tied them to particular plots of land if not to specific owners. In short, Europe's kingdoms resembled those of Africa or Mesoamerica but differed greatly from the more egalitarian societies found in America north of Mexico (see Map 1.3).

Map 1.3 Europe in 1453

The Europeans who ventured out into the Atlantic came from countries on the northwestern edge of the continent, which was divided into numerous competing nations.

1-4a Gender, Work, Politics, and Religion

Most Europeans, like most Africans and Americans, lived in small villages. Only a few cities dotted the landscape, most of them seaports or political capitals. European farmers, called peasants, owned or leased separate plots of land, but they worked the fields communally. Men did most of the fieldwork; women helped out chiefly at planting and harvest. In some regions men concentrated on herding livestock while women cared for children, prepared and preserved food, milked cows, and kept poultry. A woman married to a city artisan or storekeeper might assist her husband in business. Because Europeans kept domesticated animals (pigs, goats, sheep, and cattle) for meat, hunting had little economic importance in their cultures, and served instead primarily as a sport for male aristocrats.

Unlike in Africa or the Americas, men dominated all areas of public life in Europe. A few women—notably Queen Elizabeth I of England—achieved status or power by right of birth, but the vast majority were excluded from positions of authority. European women also generally held inferior social, religious, and economic positions, yet they wielded power in their own households over children and servants. In contrast to the freedom children enjoyed in Native American families, European children were tightly controlled and subjected to harsh discipline.

Christianity was the dominant European religion. In the West, authority rested in the Catholic Church, based in Rome and led by the pope, who then as now directed a wholly male and officially celibate clergy. Although Europeans were, until the sixteenth century, nominally Catholic, many adhered to local belief systems that the church deemed heretical but failed to extinguish. Kings allied themselves with the church when it suited them, but often acted independently. Yet even so, the Christian nations of Europe from the twelfth century on publicly united in a goal of driving non-Christians (especially Muslims) not only from the European continent but also from the holy city of Jerusalem, which caused the series of wars known as the Crusades. Nevertheless, in the fifteenth century, Muslims dominated the commerce and geography of the Mediterranean world, especially after they conquered Constantinople (capital of the Christian Byzantine empire) in 1453. Few would have predicted that Christian Europeans would ever challenge that dominance.

1-4b Effects of Plague and Warfare

When the fifteenth century began, European nations were slowly recovering from the devastating epidemic known as the Black Death, which first struck in 1346. This plague seems to have arrived in Europe from China, traveling with long-distance traders along the Silk Road. The disease then recurred with particular severity in the 1360s and 1370s. Although no precise figures are available and the impact of the Black Death varied from region to region, the best estimate is that fully one-third of Europe's people died during those terrible years. A precipitous economic decline followed—in some regions more than half of the workers had died—as did severe social, political, and religious disruption because of the deaths of clergymen and other leading figures.

As plague ravaged the population, England and France waged the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453), which began after English monarchs claimed the French throne. The war interrupted overland trade routes connecting England and Antwerp (in modern Belgium) to Venice, and thence to India and China. England, on the periphery of the Mediterranean commercial core, exported wool and cloth to Antwerp in exchange for spices and silks from the East. Needing a new way to reach their northern trading partners, eastern Mediterranean merchants forged a maritime route to Antwerp. Using a triangular, or lateen, sail (rather than then-standard square rigging) improved the maneuverability of ships, enabling vessels to sail north around the European coast. Maritime navigation also improved through the acquisition of a Chinese invention, the compass, and the perfection of instruments like the astrolabe and the quadrant, which allowed sailors to gauge their latitude by measuring the relationship of the sun, moon, or certain stars to the horizon.

Everyday scenes, illuminated page from Book of Hours of King Don Manuel I, manuscript, Portugal 16th Century/DE AGOSTINI EDITORE/Bridgeman Images

▲ Daily life in early sixteenth-century Portugal, as illustrated in a manuscript prayer book. At top a prosperous family shares a meal being served by an enslaved African. Other scenes show male laborers clearing land and hunting birds (left) and chopping wood (right), while at bottom a woman plants seeds in a prepared bed and in the top background female servants work in the kitchen.

1-4c Political and Technological Change

After the Hundred Years' War, European monarchs forcefully consolidated their previously diffuse political power and raised new revenues by increasing the taxes they levied on an already hard-pressed peasantry. The long military struggle led to new pride in national identity, which began to eclipse prevailing regional and dynastic loyalties. In England, Henry VII in 1485 founded the Tudor dynasty and began uniting a divided land. In France, the successors of Charles VII made the kingdom more cohesive. Most successful of all were Ferdinand of Aragón and Isabella of Castile, who married in 1469, founding a strongly Catholic and increasingly unified Spain. In 1492, they defeated the Muslims who had lived in Spain and Portugal for centuries, and expelled all Jews and Muslims from their domain.

The fifteenth century also brought technological change to Europe. **Movable type** and the **printing press**, invented in Germany in the 1450s, made information more accessible over wider distances. Printing stimulated Europeans' curiosity about fabled lands across the seas, lands they could now read about in books. The most important such works were Ptolemy's *Geography,* a description of the known world written in ancient times, first published in 1475; and Marco Polo's *Travels*, published in 1477. The *Travels* recounted the Venetian merchant's adventures in thirteenth-century China and intriguingly described that nation as bordered on the east by an ocean. Polo's account circulated widely among educated elites, first in manuscript and later in print. The book led many Europeans to believe they could reach China in oceangoing vessels instead of relying on the Silk Road or the Spice Route overland across East Africa. A transoceanic route, if it existed, would allow northern Europeans to circumvent the Muslim and Venetian merchants who had long controlled their access to Asian goods.

1-4d Motives for Exploration

Technological advances and the growing strength of newly powerful national rulers catalyzed the European explorations of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Each country craved easy access to African and Asian goods—silk, dyes, perfumes, jewels, sugar, gold, and especially spices. Pepper, cloves, cinnamon, and nutmeg were desirable not only for seasoning food but also because they were believed to have medicinal and magical properties. Their allure stemmed largely from their rarity, their extraordinary cost, and their mysterious origins. They passed through so many hands en route to London or Seville that no European knew exactly where they came from. (Nutmeg, for example, grew only on nine tiny islands in the Moluccas, now eastern Indonesia.) Avoiding intermediaries in Venice and Constantinople, and acquiring such valuable products directly, would improve a nation's balance of trade and its standing relative to other countries, in addition to supplying its wealthy leaders with coveted luxury items that bolstered their power.

movable type Type in which each character is cast on a separate piece of metal.

printing press A machine that transfers lettering or images by contact with various forms of inked surface onto paper or similar material fed into it in various ways.

A concern for spreading Christianity around the world supplemented these economic motives. The linking of material and spiritual goals may seem contradictory, but fifteenth-century Europeans saw no necessary conflict between the two. Explorers and colonizers—especially Roman Catholics—sought to convert "heathen" peoples to Christianity. At the same time, they hoped to increase their nation's wealth by establishing direct trade with Africa, China, India, and the Moluccas.

1-5 Early European Explorations

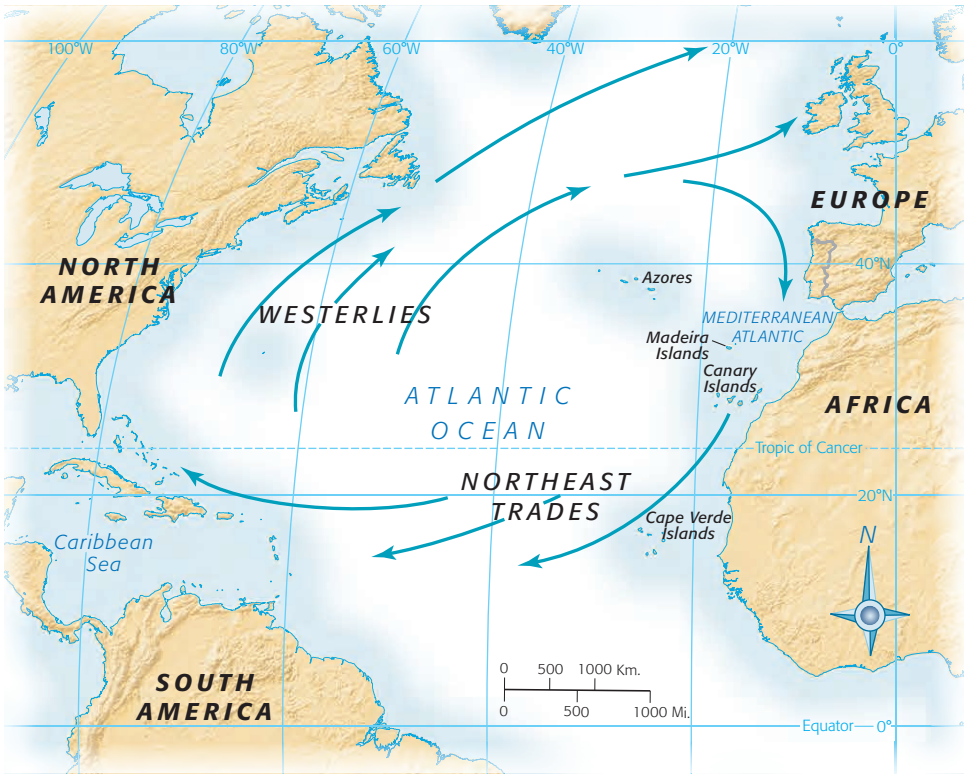
- **What navigational tools and techniques enabled Europeans to engage in exploration?**
- **What were the consequences of early European exploration?**

To establish that trade, European mariners first had to explore the oceans. Seafarers needed not just the maneuverable vessels and navigational aids increasingly used in the fourteenth century but also knowledge of the sea, its currents, and especially its winds, which powered their ships. Where would Atlantic breezes carry their square-rigged ships, which, even with the addition of a triangular sail, needed to run before the wind (that is, to have the wind directly behind the vessel)?

1-5a Sailing the Mediterranean Atlantic

Europeans honed new navigation techniques in the region called the Mediterranean Atlantic, the expanse of ocean located south and west of Spain and bounded by the islands of the Azores (on the west) and the Canaries (on the south), with the Madeiras in their midst (see Map 1.4). Europeans reached all three sets of islands during the fourteenth century—first the Canaries in the 1330s, then the Madeiras and the Azores. The Canaries proved a popular destination for mariners from Iberia, the peninsula that includes Spain and Portugal. Sailing to the Canaries from Europe was easy, because strong winds known as the Northeast Trades blow southward along the Iberian and African coastlines. The voyage took about a week, and the volcanic peaks on the islands made them easy to spot.

The problem was getting back. The Iberian sailor attempting to return home faced a major obstacle: the winds that had brought him so quickly to the Canaries now blew directly at him. Confronted by contrary winds, mariners had traditionally waited for the wind to change, but the Northeast Trades blew steadily. So they developed a new method: sailing "around the wind." That meant sailing as directly against the wind as was possible without being forced to change course. In the Mediterranean Atlantic, a mariner would head northwest into the open ocean, until—weeks later—he reached the winds that would carry him home, the so-called Westerlies.



Map 1.4 Atlantic Winds and Islands

European mariners had to explore the oceans before they could find new lands. The first realm they discovered was that of Atlantic winds and islands.

Those winds blow (we now know) northward along the coast of North America before heading east toward Europe.

This solution must at first have seemed to defy common sense, but it became the key to successful exploration of both the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans. Once a sailor understood the winds and their allied currents, he no longer feared leaving Europe without being able to return.

1-5b Islands of the Mediterranean Atlantic

During the fifteenth century, armed with knowledge of the winds and currents of the Mediterranean Atlantic, Iberian seamen regularly visited the three island groups, which they could reach in two weeks or less. The uninhabited Azores were soon settled by Portuguese migrants, who raised wheat for sale in Europe and sold livestock to passing sailors. The Madeiras also had no Native peoples, and by the 1450s Portuguese colonists were employing slaves (probably Jews and Muslims from Iberia) to grow sugar for export to the mainland. By the 1470s, Madeira had developed a colonial **plantation** economy. For the first time in world history, a region was settled explicitly to cultivate a valuable crop—sugar—to be sold elsewhere. Moreover, because the work involved in large-scale plantation agriculture was so back-breaking, only a supply of enslaved laborers (who could not opt to quit) could ensure the system's continued success.

The Canaries did have indigenous residents—the Guanche people, who began trading animal skins and dyes with their European visitors. After 1402, the French, Portuguese, and Spanish began sporadically attacking the islands. The Guanches resisted vigorously, even though they were weakened by their susceptibility to alien European diseases. One by one, the seven islands fell to Europeans who then carried off Guanches as slaves to the Madeiras or Iberia. Spain conquered the last island in 1496 and subsequently converted the land into sugar plantations. Collectively, the Canaries and Madeira became known as the Wine Islands because much of their sugar production was used to fortify sweet wines.

1-5c Portuguese Trading Posts in Africa

While some European rulers and traders concentrated on exploiting the islands of the Mediterranean Atlantic, others used them as stepping-stones to Africa. In 1415, Portugal seized control of Ceuta, a Muslim city in North Africa (see Map 1.2). Prince Henry the Navigator, son of King John I of Portugal, knew that vast wealth awaited the first European nation to tap the riches of Africa and Asia directly. Repeatedly, he dispatched ships southward along the African coast, attempting to discover an oceanic route to Asia. But not until after Prince Henry's death did Bartholomew Dias round the southern tip of Africa (1488) and Vasco da Gama finally reach India (1498).

plantation A large-scale agricultural enterprise growing commercial crops and often employing coerced or slave labor.

At Malabar, da Gama located the richest source of peppercorns in the world.

Long before that, Portugal reaped the benefits of its seafarers' voyages. Although West African states successfully resisted European penetration of the interior, they allowed the Portuguese to establish coastal trading posts. Charging the traders rent and levying duties on goods they imported, the African kingdoms benefited considerably from easier access to European manufactures. The Portuguese gained, too, for they no longer had to rely on trans-Saharan camel caravans. Their vessels earned immense profits by swiftly transporting African gold, ivory, and slaves to Europe. By bargaining with African masters to purchase their slaves and then carrying those bondspeople to Iberia, the Portuguese introduced black slavery into Europe.

1-5d Lessons of Early Colonization

An island off the African coast, previously uninhabited, proved critical to Portuguese success. In the 1480s, the Portuguese colonized São Tomé, located in the Gulf of Guinea (see Map 1.2). By that time, Madeira had reached the limit of its capacity to produce sugar. The soil of São Tomé proved ideal for raising that valuable crop, and plantation agriculture there expanded rapidly. Planters imported large numbers of slaves from the mainland to work in the cane fields, thus creating the first economy based primarily on the bondage of black Africans.

By the 1490s, even before Christopher Columbus set sail to the west, Europeans had learned three key lessons of colonization in the Mediterranean Atlantic. First, they had learned how to transplant their crops and livestock successfully to exotic locations. Second, they had discovered that the Native peoples of those lands could be either conquered (like the Guanches) or exploited (like the Africans). Third, they had developed a viable model of plantation slavery and a system for supplying nearly unlimited quantities of such workers. The stage was set for a pivotal moment in world history.

1-6 Voyages of Columbus, Cabot, and Their Successors

- What was the relationship between explorers and European monarchs?
- What knowledge of the wider world did European explorers gain?

Christopher Columbus was well schooled in the lessons of the Mediterranean Atlantic. Born in 1451 in the Italian city-state of Genoa, this largely self-educated son of a wool merchant was by the 1490s an experienced sailor and mapmaker. Like many mariners of the day, he was drawn to Portugal and its islands, especially Madeira, where he commanded a merchant vessel. At least once he sailed to the Portuguese outpost on Africa's Gold Coast. There he became obsessed with gold, and there he came to understand the economic potential of the slave trade.

Christopher Columbus Genoese explorer who claimed the island of San Salvador in the Bahamas and other places in the Caribbean and Central America for the king and queen of Spain.

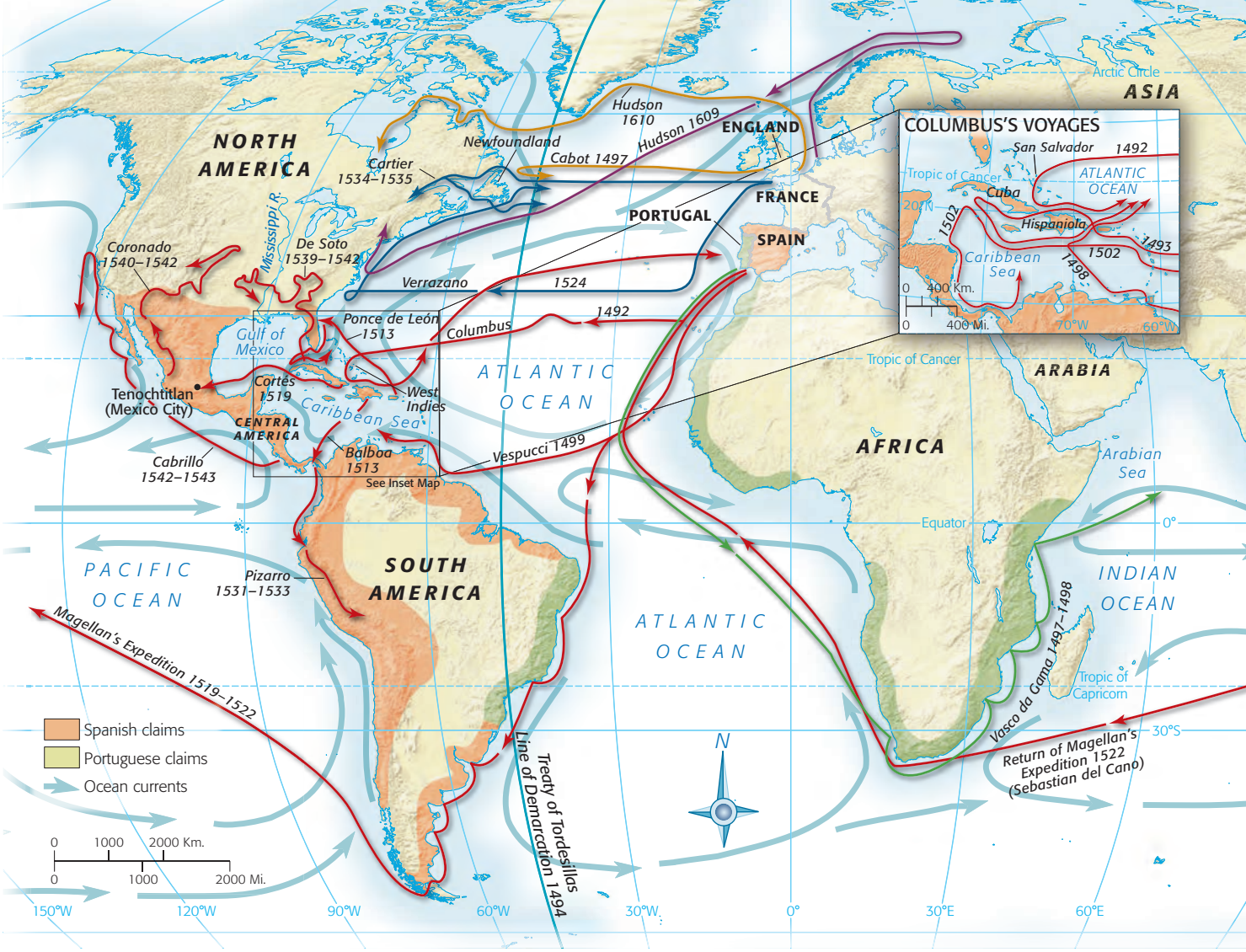
Like all accomplished seafarers, Columbus knew the world was round. But he differed from other cartographers in his estimate of the earth's size: he thought that China lay only three thousand miles from Europe's southern coast. Thus, he argued, it would be easier to reach Asia by sailing west than by making the difficult voyage around the southern tip of Africa. Experts scoffed at this crackpot notion, accurately predicting that the two continents lay twelve thousand miles apart. When Columbus in 1484 asked the Portuguese rulers to back his plan to sail west to Asia, they rejected what appeared to be a crazy scheme.

1-6a Columbus's Voyage

Jealous of rival Portugal's successes in Africa, Spain's Ferdinand and Isabella were more receptive to Columbus's ideas. Urged on by some Spanish noblemen and a group of Italian merchants residing in Castile, the monarchs agreed to finance most of the risky voyage—Columbus himself would have to pay a quarter of the costs. They hoped the profits would pay for a new expedition to conquer Muslim-held Jerusalem. And so, on August 3, 1492, Columbus set sail from the Spanish port of Palos in command of three ships—the *Pinta*, the *Niña*, and the *Santa Maria*.

The first part of the journey was familiar, for the ships steered down the Northeast Trades to the Canary Islands. There Columbus refitted his ships, adding triangular sails to make them more maneuverable. On September 6, the flotilla weighed anchor and headed into the unknown ocean. The sailors were anxious about the winds, the waves, and the distance. To stave off panic, Columbus lied, underreporting the number of nautical miles the convoy covered each day. He kept two sets of logbooks, an early chronicler remembered, "one false and the other true."

Just over a month later, the vessels found land approximately where Columbus thought Cipangu (Japan) was located (see Map 1.5). On October 12, he and his men anchored off an island in the present-day Bahamas, called Guanahaní by its inhabitants. The admiral and members of his crew went ashore with guns drawn. Planting a flag bearing a Christian cross and the initials of Ferdinand and Isabella, Columbus claimed the territory for Spain and renamed Guanahaní San Salvador. (Because Columbus's description of his landfall can be variously interpreted, several different places today claim to be his landing site.) Later, he went on to explore the islands now known as Cuba and Hispaniola, which the Native Taíno people called Colba and Bohío. Because he thought he had reached the East Indies (the Spice Islands), Columbus referred to the inhabitants of the region as "Indians," a mistake that continues to reverberate even today. The Taínos thought the Europeans had come from the sky, and wherever Columbus



Map 1.5 European Explorations in America

In the century following Columbus's voyages, European adventurers explored the coasts and parts of the interior of North and South America.

went crowds of curious Taínos gathered to meet and exchange gifts with him.

1-6b Columbus's Observations

Three themes predominate in Columbus's log, the major source of information on this first recorded encounter between Europe and what would come to be called the Americas. First, he was eager to exploit the region's natural resources. He insistently asked the Taínos where he could find gold, pearls, and spices. Each time, his informants replied (via signs) that such products could be obtained on other islands or on the mainland. Eventually, he came to mistrust such answers, noting, "I am beginning to believe . . . they will tell me anything I want to hear."

Second, Columbus was amazed by the strange and beautiful plants and animals he encountered. "Here the fishes are so unlike ours that it is amazing . . . . The colors are so bright that anyone would marvel," he noted. "The song of the little birds might make a man wish never to leave here." Yet Columbus's interest was not only aesthetic. "I believe that there are many plants and trees here that could be worth a lot in Spain for use as dyes, spices, and medicines," he observed, adding that he was carrying home to Europe "a sample of everything I can," so that experts could examine them.

Included in his cargo of curiosities were some of the islands' human residents, whom Columbus also evaluated as resources to answer European needs. The Taínos were, he said, handsome, gentle, and friendly, though they told him of the fierce Caniba (today called Caribs) who lived on other islands, raided their villages, and ate their captives (hence today's word *cannibal*). Although Columbus feared and distrusted the Caribs, he saw the Taínos as likely converts to Catholicism, remarking that "if devout religious persons knew the Indian language well, all these people would soon become Christians." In his mind, conversion was the ally of enslavement. The islanders "ought to make good and skilled servants," Columbus declared. It would be easy to "subject everyone and make them do what you wished."

Naming America

In 1507, German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller created the first map to label the newly discovered landmass on the western side of the Atlantic as "America." He named the continent after Amerigo Vespucci, the Italian explorer who realized he had reached a "new world" rather than islands off the coast of Asia. Waldseemüller's map appeared in a short book called *Cosmographiae Introductio*, or *Introduction to Cosmography*—the study of the known world. The globe he illustrated was both familiar and new. The sun revolved around the earth, as scholars had believed for a millennium. Yet the voyages of Columbus, Vespucci, and others had reconfigured the earth.

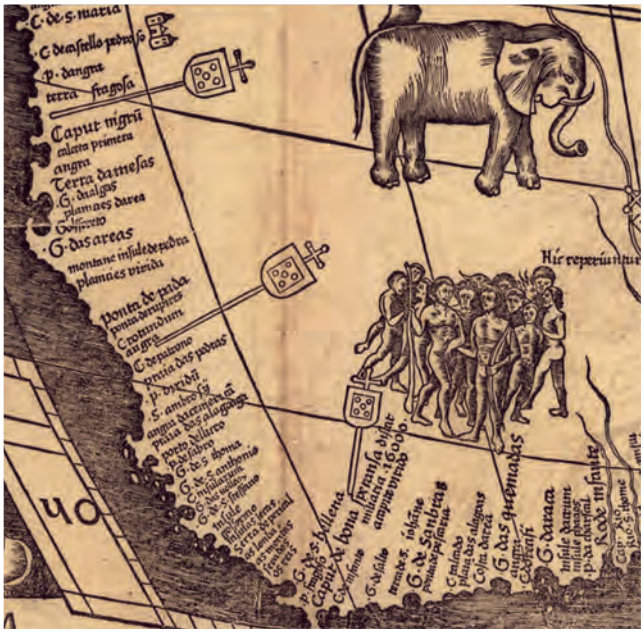
When the twelve sheets of Waldseemüller's map are put together, the image stretches nearly five by eight feet. One of the largest printed maps ever then produced, it includes an astonishing level of detail.

CRITICAL THINKING

- What symbols indicate European territorial claims in America and Africa?
- Why might Africa be shown as the center of the known world?

Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, D.C. [G3200 1507 .W3]

◀ *Waldseemüller map*



Library of Congress

▲ *African peoples*

Library of Congress

▲ *America*

The records of the first encounter between Europeans and Americans revealed themes that would be of enormous significance for centuries to come. Europeans marveled at the new world, and they wanted to extract profits by exploiting American resources, including plants, animals, and people alike. Later explorers would follow Columbus's tendency to divide Native peoples into "good" (Taínos) and "bad" (Caribs).

Columbus made three more voyages, exploring most of the major Caribbean islands and sailing along the coasts of Central and South America. Until the day he died, in 1506 at the age of fifty-five, he believed he had reached Asia.

Others knew better. The Florentine merchant Amerigo Vespucci, who explored the South American coast in 1499, was the first to promote the idea that a new continent had been discovered. In 1502 or 1503, versions of Vespucci's letters were printed in Florence under the title *Mundus Novus*—"new world." By then, Spain, Portugal, and Pope Alexander VI had signed the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), confirming Portugal's dominance in Africa—and later Brazil—in exchange for Spanish preeminence in the rest of the Western Hemisphere.

1-6c Norse and Other Northern Voyagers

Five hundred years before Columbus, about the year 1001, a **Norse** expedition under Leif Ericsson sailed to North America across the Davis Strait, which separated Greenland from Baffin Island (located northeast of Hudson Bay; see Map 1.1) by just 200 nautical miles. They settled at a site they named "**Vinland**," but attacks by local residents forced them to abandon it after just a few years. In the 1960s, archaeologists determined that the Norse had established an outpost at what is now L'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland. Vinland was probably located farther south.

Later European explorers knew nothing of the earlier Norse voyages, but some historians argue that during the fifteenth century, whalers and fishermen from the Basque country (modern southern France and northern Spain) located rich fishing grounds off Newfoundland but kept the information secret. Whether or not fishermen crossed the entire Atlantic, they thoroughly explored its northern reaches, sailing regularly between Europe, England, Ireland, and Iceland. The mariners who explored the region of North America that was to become the United States and Canada built on their knowledge.

The winds that the northern sailors confronted posed problems on their outbound rather than on their homeward journeys. The same Westerlies that carried Columbus back to Europe blew in the faces of northerners looking west. But mariners soon learned that the strongest winds shifted southward during the winter. By departing from northern ports in the spring, they could make adequate headway if they steered northward. Thus, whereas the first landfall of most sailors to the south was somewhere in the Caribbean, those taking the northern route usually reached North America along the coast of today's Maine or Canada.

1-6d John Cabot's Explorations

The European generally credited with "discovering" mainland North America is Zuan Cabboto, known today as **John Cabot**. Cabot brought to Europe the first formal knowledge of the northern continental coastline and claimed the land for England. Like Columbus, Cabot was a master mariner from the Italian city-state of Genoa; the two men probably knew each other. Calculating that England—which traded with Asia only through a long series of intermediaries—would be eager to sponsor exploratory voyages, he gained financial backing from King Henry VII. He set sail from Bristol in May 1497 in the *Mathew*, reaching North America about a month later. After exploring the coast of modern Newfoundland for a month, Cabot rode the Westerlies back to England, arriving just fifteen days after he left North America.

The voyages of Columbus, Cabot, and their successors brought the Eastern and Western Hemispheres together. Portuguese explorer Pedro Álvares Cabral reached Brazil in 1500; John Cabot's son Sebastian followed his father to North America in 1507; France financed Giovanni da Verrazzano in 1524 and Jacques Cartier in 1534; and in 1609 and 1610, Henry Hudson explored the North American coast for the Dutch West India Company (see Map 1.5). All were searching primarily for the legendary "Northwest Passage" through the Americas, hoping to find an easy water route to the riches of Asia. (Nonexistent in early modern days, the Northwest passage may soon become a reality because of global warming.) But in a sign of what was to come, Verrazzano observed, "the [American] countryside is, in fact, full of promise and deserves to be developed for itself."

1-7 Spanish Exploration and Conquest

- **Why did Spaniards conquer parts of the Americas?**
- **What was the Spanish method of colonization in the Americas?**
- **What was the impact of the Spanish discovery and control of silver deposits in the Americas?**

Only in the areas that Spain explored and claimed did colonization begin immediately. On his second voyage in 1493, Columbus brought to Hispaniola seventeen ships loaded with twelve hundred men, along with seeds,

Norse Also known as Vikings, they were members of a warrior culture from Scandinavia.

Vinland The site of the first known attempt at European settlement in the Americas.

John Cabot Italian explorer who established English claims to the "New World."

plants, livestock, chickens, and dogs—as well as microbes, rats, and weeds. The settlement he named Isabela (in the modern Dominican Republic) and its successors became the staging area for the Spanish invasion of America, an often brutal and highly centralized conquest. On the islands of Cuba and Hispaniola, the Europeans and the animals they imported learned to adapt to the new environment. When the Spaniards moved on to explore the mainland, they rode island-bred horses and ate island-bred cattle and hogs.

1-7a Cortés and Other Explorers

At first, Spanish explorers fanned out around the Caribbean basin. In 1513, Juan Ponce de León reached Florida, and Vasco Núñez de Balboa crossed the Isthmus of Panama to the Pacific Ocean, followed by Pánfilo de Narváez and others who traced the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. In the 1530s and 1540s, **conquistadors** traveled farther, exploring many regions claimed by the Spanish monarchs: Francisco Vásquez de Coronado journeyed through the southwestern portion of what is now the United States at approximately the same time that Hernán de Soto explored the Southeast. Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo sailed along the California coast. Francisco Pizarro, who ventured into western South America, acquired the richest silver mines in the world by conquering the Incas. But the most important conquistador was Hernán Cortés, a Spanish notary who first arrived in the Caribbean in 1506. In 1519, he led a force of roughly six hundred men from Cuba to the Mexican mainland to search for rumored wealthy cities.

1-7b Capture of Tenochtitlán

As he traveled on horseback toward the Aztec capital, Cortés, speaking through Doña Marina and other interpreters, recruited peoples whom the Aztecs had long subjugated. The Spaniards' huge domesticated beasts and noisy weapons awed their new allies. Yet the Spaniards, too, were awed. Years later, Bernal Díaz del Castillo recalled his first sight of Tenochtitlán, built on islands in Lake Texcoco: "We were amazed and said that it was like the enchantments … on account of the great towers and cues [temples] and buildings rising from the water, and all built of masonry." Soldiers wondered "whether the things that we saw were not a dream."

The Spaniards came to Tenochtitlán not only with horses and guns but also with smallpox, transmitting an epidemic that had begun on Hispaniola. The disease peaked in 1520, fatally weakening Tenochtitlán's defenders. "It spread over the people as great destruction," an Aztec later remembered. "There was great havoc. Very many died of it." Largely as a consequence, Tenochtitlán surrendered in 1521, and the Spaniards built Mexico City on its site. Cortés and his men seized a fabulous treasure of gold and silver. Thus, less than three decades after Columbus's first voyage, the Spanish monarchs—who treated the American territories as their personal possessions—controlled the richest, most extensive empire Europe had known since ancient Rome.

conquistadors Spanish conquerors or adventurers in the Americas.

encomienda Spanish system which awarded Native peoples' labor to wealthy colonists.

1-7c Spanish Colonization

Spain established the model of colonization that other countries later imitated, a model with three major elements. First, the Crown tried to maintain tight control over the colonies, imposing a hierarchical government that allowed little autonomy to remote jurisdictions. That control included, for example, carefully vetting prospective emigrants and limiting their number. Settlers were then required to live in towns under the authorities' watchful eyes, and to import all their manufactured goods from Spain. Roman Catholic priests dispatched to the new territories attempted to ensure the colonists' conformity with orthodox religious views.

Second, men comprised most of the first colonists. Although some Spanish women later immigrated to America, the men took primarily indigenous—and, later, African—women as their wives or concubines, a development more often than not encouraged by colonial administrators. They thereby began creating the racially mixed population that characterizes much of Latin America to the present day.

Third, the colonies' wealth was based on the exploitation of both the Native population and slaves imported from Africa. Spaniards took over the role once assumed by Native leaders who had exacted labor and tribute from their subjects. Cortés established the ***encomienda system***, which granted indigenous villages to individual conquistadors as a reward for their services, thus legalizing slavery in all but name.

In 1542, after stinging criticism from a colonial priest, Bartolomé de las Casas, the Spanish monarch formulated a new code of laws to reform the system, forbidding the conquerors from enslaving Native peoples while still allowing them to collect money and goods from tributary villages. In response to the restrictions and to the declining indigenous populations, the *encomenderos*, familiar with slavery in Spain, began to import kidnapped Africans in order to increase the labor force under their direct control. They employed Native peoples and Africans primarily in gold and silver mines, on sugar plantations, and on huge horse, cattle, and sheep ranches. African slavery was far more common on the larger Caribbean islands than on the mainland.

Many demoralized residents of Mesoamerica accepted the Christian religion brought to New Spain by Franciscan and Dominican friars—men who had joined religious orders bound by vows of poverty and celibacy. The friars devoted their energies to persuading indigenous peoples to

Snark/Art Resource, NY

▲ An image from the Codex Azcatitlan, an account of the Aztec (Mexica) people's history from their arrival in the Valley of Mexico through the conquest by Cortés. Printed European-style in the late sixteenth century—that is, about seven decades after the conquest—the codex nonetheless presents a Native viewpoint on the cataclysmic events. Here Cortés and his men are preceded by Malinche, his interpreter and mistress, and followed by their Native allies bearing food supplies. Also in the crowd is Cortés's black slave.

move into towns and to build Roman Catholic churches. Spaniards leveled existing cities, constructing cathedrals and monasteries on sites once occupied by Aztec, Incan, and Mayan temples. In such towns, Native peoples were exposed to European customs and religious rituals designed to assimilate Catholic and pagan beliefs. Friars deliberately juxtaposed the cult of the Virgin Mary with that of the corn goddess, and Native peoples adeptly melded aspects of their traditional worldview with Christianity, in a process anthropologists call *syncretism*. Thousands of indigenous men and women residing in Spanish territory embraced Catholicism, at least partly because it was the religion of their new rulers and they were accustomed to obedience.

1-7d Gold, Silver, and Spain's Decline

The New World's rich deposits of gold and silver, initially a boon, ultimately brought about the decline of Spain as a major power. China, a huge country with silver coinage, insatiably demanded Spanish silver, gobbling up an estimated half of the total output of New World mines while paying twice the price current in Europe. In the 1570s, the Spanish began to dispatch silver-laden galleons annually from Acapulco (on Mexico's west coast) across the Pacific Ocean to trade at their new settlement at Manila, in the Philippines. This gave Spaniards easy access to luxury Chinese goods such as silk and Asian spices.

But the influx of wealth led to rapid inflation, which caused Spanish products to be overpriced in international markets and imported goods to become cheaper in Spain. The once-profitable Spanish textile industry collapsed. The seemingly endless income from American colonies also emboldened Spanish monarchs to spend lavishly on wars against the Dutch and the English. Several times in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the monarchs repudiated the state debt, wreaking havoc on the nation's

finances. When the South American gold and silver mines started to give out in the mid-seventeenth century, Spain's economy crumbled, and the nation lost much of its international importance.

1-8 The Columbian Exchange

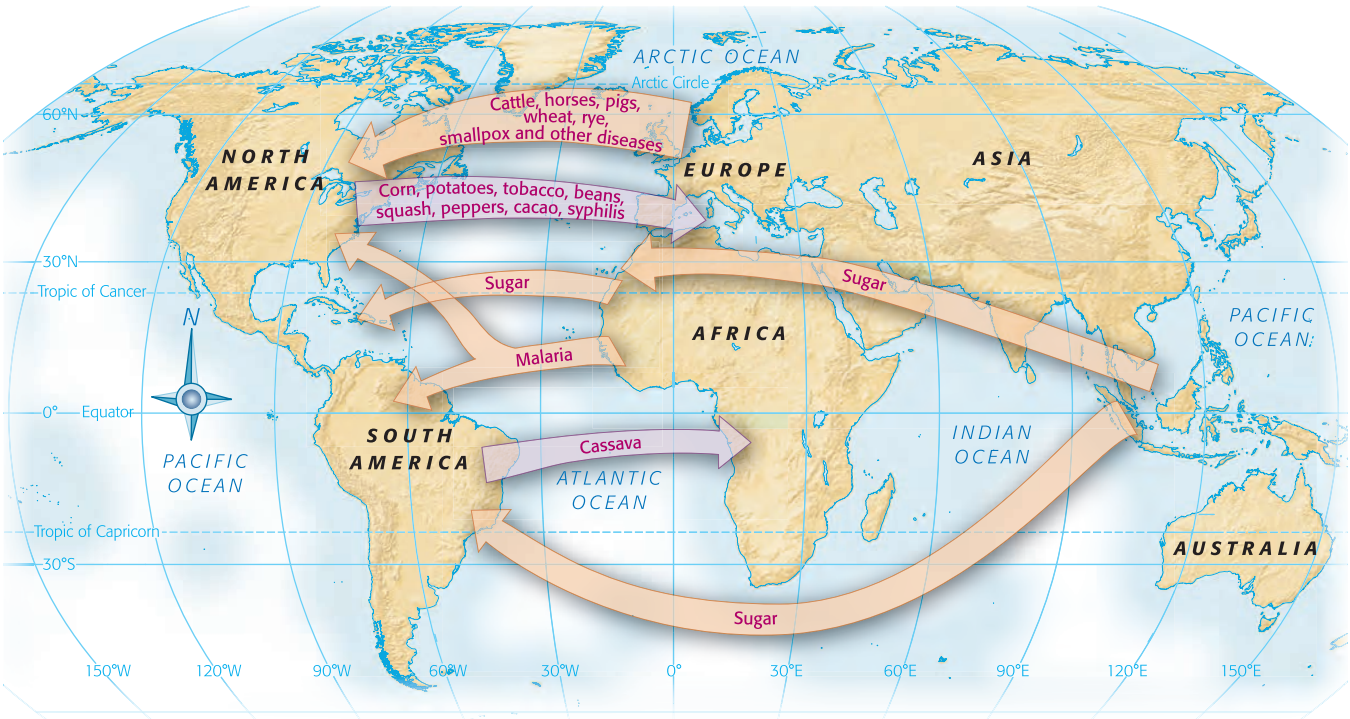
- **What was the Columbian Exchange?**
- **What were the consequences of the Columbian Exchange for the peoples on both sides of the Atlantic?**

A broad mutual transfer of diseases, plants, and animals (called the **Columbian Exchange** by historian Alfred Crosby; see Map 1.6) resulted directly from the European voyages of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and from Spanish colonization. Separated for millennia, the Eastern and Western Hemispheres had developed widely different life forms. Many large mammals, such as cattle and horses, were native to the connected continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa, while the Americas contained no domesticated beasts larger than dogs and llamas. The vegetable crops of the Americas—particularly maize, beans, squash, cassava, and potatoes—were more nutritious and produced higher yields than Europe's and Africa's wheat, millet, and rye. In time, Native peoples learned to raise and consume European livestock, and Europeans and Africans became accustomed to planting and eating American crops. (About three-fifths of all crops cultivated in the world today were first grown in the Americas.) The diets of ordinary people in all three parts of the globe were consequently vastly enriched. Partly as a result, the world's population doubled over the next three hundred years. The pressure of increased population in Europe propelled further waves of settler colonists westward, keeping the exchange in motion.

Columbian Exchange The widespread exchange, both deliberate and accidental, of animals, plants, germs, and peoples between Europe, Africa, and the Americas.

1-8a Smallpox and Other Diseases

Diseases carried west from Europe and Africa had a devastating impact on the Americas. Native peoples fell victim to microbes that had long infested the other continents and had



Map 1.6 Major Items in the Columbian Exchange

As European adventurers traversed the world in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they initiated the "Columbian Exchange" of plants, animals, and diseases. These events changed the lives of the peoples of the world forever, bringing new foods and new pestilence to both sides of the Atlantic.

repeatedly killed hundreds of thousands but had also often left survivors with some measure of immunity. It was not only their isolation that made the indigenous populations of the Americas vulnerable, however. Non-biological processes, especially contacts forged through slave-trading and other forms of long-distance commerce, exacerbated the power of microbes and furthered the dramatic depopulation trend. When Columbus landed on Hispaniola in 1492, approximately half a million people resided there. Fifty years later, that island had fewer than two thousand Native inhabitants. Within thirty years of the first landfall at Guanahaní, not one Taíno survived in the Bahamas.

Although measles, typhus, influenza, malaria, and other illnesses severely afflicted the Native peoples, the greatest of the new infectious killers was smallpox, spread primarily by direct human contact. Epidemics recurred at twenty- or thirty-year intervals, when bouts often appeared in quick succession, so that weakened survivors of one wave would be felled by a second or third. Large numbers of deaths further disrupted societies already undergoing severe strains caused by colonization, rendering Native peoples more vulnerable to droughts, crop failures, and European invaders.

Even far to the north, where smaller American populations encountered only a few Europeans, disease ravaged the countryside. A great epidemic, probably viral hepatitis, swept through the villages along the coast north of Cape Cod from 1616 to 1618. Again, the mortality rate may have been as high as 90 percent. An English traveler several years later commented that the people had "died on heapes, as they lay in their houses." Bones and skulls covered the ruins of villages. Just a few years after this dramatic depopulation of the area, English colonists were able to establish settlements virtually unopposed. Disease made a powerful if accidental ally.

The Americans, though, seem to have taken an unintended revenge. They probably gave the Europeans syphilis, a virulent sexually transmitted disease. The first recorded European case of the ailment occurred in 1493 in Spain, shortly after Columbus's return from the Caribbean. Although less likely than smallpox to cause immediate death, syphilis was dangerous and debilitating. Carried by soldiers, sailors, and prostitutes, it spread quickly through Europe and Asia, reaching China by 1505.

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▲ A male effigy dating from 200–800 CE, found in a burial site in Nayarit, Mexico. The lesions covering the figurine suggest that the person it represents is suffering from syphilis, which, untreated, produces these characteristic markings on the body in its later stages. Such evidence as this pre-Columbian effigy has now convinced most scholars that syphilis originated in the Americas—a hypothesis in dispute for many years.

1-8b Sugar, Horses, and Tobacco

The exchange of three commodities had significant impacts on Europe and the Americas. Sugar, first domesticated in the East Indies, was being grown on the islands of the Mediterranean Atlantic by 1450. The ravenous European demand for sugar—a medicine that quickly became a luxury foodstuff—led Columbus to take Canary Island sugar canes to Hispaniola on his 1493 voyage. By the 1520s, plantations in the Greater Antilles worked by African slaves regularly shipped cargoes of sugar to Spain. Half a century later, the Portuguese colony in Brazil (founded 1532) was producing sugar for the European market on an even larger scale. After 1640, sugar cultivation became the crucial component of English and French colonization in the Caribbean.

Horses—which, like sugar, were brought to America by Columbus in 1493—fell into the hands of Native peoples in North America during the seventeenth century. Through trade and theft, horses spread among the peoples of the Great Plains, reaching most areas by 1750. Lakotas, Comanches, and Crows, among others, came to use horses for transportation and hunting, calculated their wealth in number of horses owned, and waged war primarily on horseback. Some groups that previously had cultivated crops abandoned agriculture. Because of the acquisition of horses, a mode of subsistence that had been based on hunting several different animals, in combination with gathering and agriculture, became one focused almost wholly on hunting buffalo.

In America, Europeans encountered tobacco, which at first they believed to have beneficial medicinal effects. Smoking and chewing the "Indian weed" became a fad in Europe in the sixteenth century. Despite the efforts of

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▲ The mysterious illustrated text known as the Drake Manuscript and formally titled *Histoire Naturelle des Indies* (*Natural History of the Indies*) contains many depictions of the culture of the indigenous people of Spanish America in the 1580s. This delightful scene shows the end of a successful courtship: the woman's father sits under a tree while giving his blessing to the young couple. The future husband has proved his prowess as a hunter (note the rabbit in his hand) and the future wife her ability as a cook (she is grinding corn). Both are well dressed, and the pot boiling in the house in the background suggests a prosperous future for the happy pair.

such skeptics as King James I of England, who in 1604 pronounced smoking "loathsome to the eye, hatefull to the Nose, harmfull to the brain, [and] dangerous to the Lungs," tobacco's popularity soared. By the early seventeenth century, Englishmen could smoke the leaves at as many as seven thousand tobacco "houses" in London alone. At that point, the supply of the noxious weed came entirely from the colonies of New Spain.

The European and African invasion of the Americas therefore had a significant biological component, for the invaders carried plants and animals with them in both directions. Some creatures, such as livestock, they brought intentionally. Others, including rats (which infested their ships), weeds, and diseases, arrived unexpectedly. And the same process occurred in reverse. When Europeans returned home, they deliberately took crops including maize, potatoes, and tobacco, along with that unanticipated stowaway, syphilis.

1-9 Europeans in North America

- **What kinds of economic exchanges occurred between Native peoples and Europeans?**
- **How did exploration and engagement with the American continent and its peoples affect the relationship between Spain and England?**
- **Why did early English attempts at colonization fail?**

Europeans were initially more interested in exploiting North America's natural resources than in establishing colonies there. John Cabot had reported that fish were extraordinarily plentiful near Newfoundland, so Europeans rushed to take advantage of abundant codfish, which were in great demand as an inexpensive source of protein.

Maize

Mesoamericans believed that maize was a gift from Quetzalcoatl, the plumed serpent god. Cherokees told of an old woman whose blood produced the prized stalks after her grandson buried her body in a cleared, sunny field. For the Abenakis, the crop began when a beautiful maiden ordered a youth to drag her by the hair through a burned-over field. The long hair of the Cherokee grandmother and the Abenaki maiden turned into corn silk, the flower on the stalks that Europeans called "Indian" corn. Both tales' symbolic association of corn and women intriguingly supports archaeologists' recent suggestion that—in eastern North America at least—female plant breeders substantially improved the productivity of maize.

Maize was a major part of the ancient American diet, sacred to the Native peoples who grew it. Ground into meal, dried maize was cooked as a mush or shaped into baked flat cakes, the forerunners of modern tortillas. Native peoples also heated the dried kernels of some varieties until they popped open, just as is done today. Although the European invaders of North and South America initially disdained maize, they soon learned it could be cultivated in a wide variety of conditions—from sea level to elevations of twelve thousand feet, from regions with abundant rainfall to lands with very little rainfall. Corn was also highly productive, yielding almost twice as many calories per acre as wheat. So Europeans, too, came to rely on corn, growing it not only in their American settlements but also in their homelands.

Maize cultivation spread to Asia and Africa. Today, China is second only to the United States in corn production. In Africa, corn is grown more widely than any other crop. Still, the United States produces over 40 percent of the world's corn, almost half of it in the three states of Illinois, Iowa, and Nebraska. Heavily subsidized by the federal government, corn is the nation's largest crop. More than half of American corn is consumed by livestock. Much of the rest is processed into syrup, which sweetens carbonated beverages and candies and has been linked to the spread of obesity and Type II diabetes in the modern United States. Corn is ubiquitous: an ingredient in light beer, toothpaste, and gasolines. It is used in the manufacture of tires, wallpaper, cat litter, and aspirin. Remarkably, of the ten thousand products in a modern American grocery store, about one-fourth rely to some extent on corn.

Today, this crop bequeathed to the world by ancient American plant breeders provides one-fifth of all the calories consumed by the earth's peoples. The gift of Quetzalcoatl has linked the globe.

CRITICAL THINKING

- The dramatic ways Europeans changed the "New World" when they arrived are well known. But the currents of change ran in the reverse direction as well. This article describes the importance of maize or corn in the Americas as well as Europe. What other ideas or products that originated in the Americas made an impact on Europe?

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◀ Painted by the Englishman John White, who accompanied an expedition to the new Virginia plantation in 1585 and was later named governor of that colony, this watercolor shows three stages of the cultivation of maize in the village of Secotan. "Rype corne" appears at the top right, with "greene corne" below it, beside orderly rows of "corne newly sprong." In all three fields, the crop is carefully fenced. White's painting was a study for a printed engraving, sold to satisfy the many English readers curious about American lifeways.

French, Spanish, Basque, and Portuguese sailors regularly fished North American waters throughout the sixteenth century; Verrazzano and Cartier, in 1524 and 1534, respectively, each encountered vessels already fishing along the American coast. In the early 1570s, after Spain opened its markets to English shipping, the English (who previously had fished near Iceland for home consumption only) eagerly joined the Newfoundland fishery, thereafter selling salt cod to Spain in exchange for valuable Asian goods. The English soon became dominant in the region, which by the end of the sixteenth century was the focal point of a European commerce more valuable than that with the Gulf of Mexico.

1-9a Trade Among Native Peoples and Europeans

Fishermen quickly realized they could increase their profits by exchanging cloth and metal goods, such as pots and knives, for Native trappers' beaver pelts, used to make fashionable hats in Europe. Initially, Europeans traded from ships sailing along the coast, but later they set up outposts on the mainland to centralize and control the traffic in furs. Such outposts were inhabited chiefly by male adventurers, who aimed to send as many pelts as possible home to Europe.

The Europeans' demand for furs, especially beaver, was matched by Native peoples' desire for European goods that could make their lives easier and establish their superiority over their neighbors. Some Native groups began to concentrate so completely on trapping for the European market that they abandoned their traditional economies and became partially dependent on others for food. The intensive trade in pelts also had serious ecological consequences. In some regions, the beaver were wiped out. The disappearance of their dams led to soil erosion, which increased when European settlers cleared forests for farmland in later decades.

1-9b Contest Between Spain and England

English merchants and political leaders watched enviously as Spain was enriched by its valuable American possessions. In the mid-sixteenth century, English "sea dogs" like John Hawkins and Sir Francis Drake began to raid Spanish treasure fleets sailing home from the Caribbean. Their actions caused friction between the two countries and helped foment a war that in 1588 culminated in the defeat of a huge Spanish invasion force—the Armada—off the English coast. As part of the contest with Spain, English leaders started to think about planting colonies in the Western Hemisphere, thereby gaining better access to valuable trade goods while preventing their enemy from dominating the Americas. By the late sixteenth century, world maps labeled not only "America" but also vast territories designated "New Spain" and "New France." The glaring absence of a region called "New England" would have been a sore spot for Queen Elizabeth I and her courtiers.

Encouraging the queen to fund increased exploration across the Atlantic was Richard Hakluyt, an English clergyman who became fascinated by tales of exploratory voyages while he was a student in the 1560s. He translated and published numerous accounts of discoveries around the globe, insisting on England's preeminent claim to the North American continent. In *Divers Voyages* (1582) and especially *Principall Navigations* (1589), he argued for the benefits of English colonization, contending that "there is none, that of right may be more bolde in this enterprice than the Englishmen."

The first English colonial planners saw Spain's possessions as a model and a challenge. They hoped to reproduce Spanish successes by dispatching to America men who would exploit the Native peoples for their own and their nation's benefit. A group that included Sir Walter Raleigh began to promote a scheme to establish outposts that could trade with Native groups and serve as bases for attacks on Spain's new world possessions. Approving the idea, Queen Elizabeth authorized Raleigh to colonize North America.

1-9c Roanoke

After two preliminary expeditions, in 1587 Raleigh sent 118 colonists to the territory that tens of thousands of Native peoples called Ossomocomuck. Raleigh renamed it Virginia, after Elizabeth, the "Virgin Queen." The group, which included a small number of women and children, established a settlement on Roanoke Island, in what is now North Carolina. Their powerful neighbors included Secotans, Weapemeocs, and Chowanocs: Algonquian-speakers who had recently suffered war and drought. In this unstable environment, Native translators—kidnapped and taken to England on earlier voyages—once again played vital roles in colonial diplomacy. Negotiation was crucial, since the small band of settlers depended heavily on Native assistance; the ships scheduled to resupply them were delayed for two years by England's war with Spain. When resupply ships finally reached the tiny village in August 1590, the colonists had vanished, leaving only the word *Croatoan* (the name of a nearby island as well as one of the area's powerful Native groups) carved on a tree. Tree-ring studies show that the North Carolina coast experienced a severe drought between 1587 and 1589, which would have created a subsistence crisis for the settlers and could have led them to abandon the Roanoke site. Recent examination of a sixteenth-century watercolor map using modern imaging techniques reveals an inland fort to which the settlers may have retreated in a desperate attempt to survive.

England's first effort at planting a permanent settlement on the North American coast failed, as had earlier ventures

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▲ John White identified his subjects as the wife and daughter of the chief of Pomeioc, a village near Roanoke. Note the woman's elaborate tattoos and the fact that the daughter carries an Elizabethan doll, obviously given to her by one of the Englishmen.

by Portugal on Cape Breton Island (early 1520s), Spain in modern Georgia (mid 1520s), and France in South Carolina and northern Florida (1560s). All three enterprises collapsed because of the hostility of neighboring peoples and colonists' inability to be self-sustaining in foodstuffs. The Portuguese, the Spanish, the first French settlers, and the English failed to maintain friendly relations with indigenous peoples, and Spanish soldiers destroyed the Florida French colony in 1565 (see Section 2-1, "Spanish, French, and Dutch North America").

1-9d Harriot's *Briefe and True Report*

The reasons for such failings become clear in Thomas Harriot's *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, published in 1588 to publicize Raleigh's colony. Harriot, a noted scientist who sailed with the second of the preliminary voyages to Roanoke, described the animals, plants, and people of the region. His account reveals that, although the explorers depended on nearby villagers for most of their food, they needlessly antagonized their neighbors by killing some of them for what Harriot admitted were unjustifiable reasons.

Harriot advised later colonizers to deal more humanely with Native peoples. But his book also reveals why that advice would rarely be followed. *A Briefe and True Report* examined the possibilities for economic development in America. Harriot stressed three points: the availability of valuable commodities, the potential profitability of exotic American products, and the relative ease of manipulating the Native population. Should the Americans attempt to repel the invaders, Harriot asserted, England's disciplined soldiers and superior weaponry would deliver easy victory.

Harriot's *Briefe and True Report* depicted for his English readers a bountiful land full of opportunities for quick profit. The Native people residing there would, he thought, "in a short time be brought to civilitie" through conversion or conquest—if they did not die from disease, the ravages of which he witnessed. If Thomas Harriot anticipated key elements of the story, the fate of Roanoke demonstrates that his prediction was far off the mark. European dominance of North America would be difficult to achieve. Indeed, it never was fully achieved, in the sense Harriot and his compatriots intended.

Summary

The process of initial contact among Europeans, Africans, and Americans began in the fourteenth century, when Portuguese sailors first explored the Mediterranean Atlantic and the West African coast. Those seamen established commercial ties that brought African slaves first to Iberia and then to the islands the Europeans conquered and settled. The Mediterranean Atlantic and its island sugar plantations nurtured the ambitions of mariners who, like Christopher Columbus, ventured into previously unknown waters—those who sailed to India and Brazil as well as to the Caribbean and the North American coast. When Columbus reached the Americas, he thought he had found Asia. Later explorers knew better but, except for the Spanish, regarded the Americas primarily as a barrier that prevented them from reaching their long-sought goal of an oceanic route to the riches of China and the Moluccas. Ordinary European fishermen were the first to realize that the northern coasts had valuable products to offer: fish and furs, both much in demand in their homelands.